Nixon's second inaugural speech 1/21/73 HW

One reading of the text fortifies my confidence in the hasty comment I made on hearing most of it. It is an aggressive speech, not the neuter decribed by most of the electronic media. It does not require waiting for the others to come to get the doctrine of his Presidency. The sole question I see is how much of what he has outlined he ll be able to do. He has told us, if indirectly and quietly. And he lifted from JFK as much as I thought, for I can detect the words as well as the thoughtsin a half-dozen places. Were I to pose as a shrink, I'd say this accounts for the strange look on his face while he was reading it, often lifting his head and closing his eyes at the same time, with an odd almost smirk.

Nothing is to be gained by saying this is the biggest liar ever in the White House, and/or the most amoral, a man who says whatever seems expedient at any time without concern for truth or even proximity to it. But this has to go down as one of the more dishonest and in its own way one of the more inflamatory.

It is also an appeal to all of the right extreme, as well as the the complacent majority, to whom unkeepable promises are made. There is something in it for everyone except the genuinely needy.

It abounds in double entendres, all taken what I think is the wrong way by those I've heard comment. It is an aggressive speech. It is an interventionist speech. It is a threatening speech. It is different in suggesting if not forecasting different means of pursuing the same objectives. I think it is a speech laying out years that will divide the country, ideas that will provoke violance, tje suppression of which, wanted by the majority, will compel authoritarianism, make it acceptable, and establish it as a fixed way of American life.

Surely this brevity did not require all the time attributed to it in his post-election life. It could have been written and edited by a speechwrite in much less than a day if he had given thought to it in advance, as I presume is normal. So, I suggest that all the many reports, official reports, that he was working so hard on it are not just lies, but have the intent of hiding what he was really doing with all that time.

To put it another way, aside from the characteristic dishonesties, this is what it was supposed to be, a policy speech. It can be read without great extensions to see clearly what his policies will be. I take encouragement from the fact that he did not spell them out as pointedly as he could have, taking it to mean that it is premature for him to attempt that. Instead, he said it quietly, in ways that can be taken to mean other than what he has in mind(and have been), but in words he can later cite and give the meanings I see in them.

Of all the comment I heard on it, I recall only two that are in contact with reality. Someone on CNS or NBC noted that it is not true that the children have been taught as he alleged, his reference to the Birchers, signed and unsigned. And he made no reference at all to the Congress. I think he intends to precipitate his major battle with it as soon as he possibly can, before that leaderless mass can organize itself and its thoughts and defenses. I think he is provoking it and must, as he has been. And I think that before any case can reach it, the Supreme Court, already enough his, will be more his. This leaves but one way in which Congress can assert itself, by withholding appropriations. If it can summon enough unity for that, I doubt it can face what this would inevitably cause, and I think he banks on that. There would be chaos, and he'd blame it and have the appearance of being right. Thus he begins with a broad appeal to the satisfied whose major concerns now are costs and complacency. Without a vigorous and principled attack on him as soon as it has solid base, I see no possibility of his losing except by a fluke. He is the kind of unce tain man who can fluff it. Because he covers his insecurity with decisiveness, his sense of uncertainty and insecurity about himself is hidden. It extends even to his exceptionally limited vocabulary for a man with his education. Extending this, this speech is the speech of a paranoid, an authentic one who sees everyone except Bebe as an enemy. (Pat didn t even stand in the car until the procession was at least half way. Agnew was lost, except for the monstrous structure on the back of his car for handholds. I can't remember a vice president so downplayed. I know people who were looking at TV who were not aware that he also took his oath.)